UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1995/383
10 May 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 10 MAY 1995 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I am writing to you concerning the letter of the Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations addressed to you (S/1995/339) on 28 April 1995 and, upon instructions of my Government, I have the honour to state the following.

Referring to Security Council resolution 990 (1995) on the modalities of the mandate of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Force (UNCRO), the representative of Croatia again advanced flagrant accusations, in an arbitrary and tendentious manner, against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its alleged involvement in, and the responsibility for, the problems faced by Croatia. Such senseless claims highlight once more the chauvinist and warmongering policy of the Croatian authorities against other peoples, in the first place against the Serbs in Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a whole.

It is indeed ironic that Croatia, which effected its anti-constitutional and forcible secession from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, committed genocide against the Serb people and applied a consistent policy of ethnic cleansing, should state that "... 250,000 non-Serb and 125,000 Serb citizens of Croatia ..." have "... been displaced as a result of Belgrade-inspired and supported aggression against Croatia" when it is widely known that in the territories under Croat rule there are less than 100,000 Serbs as compared to 350,000 in 1991. On top of that, according to the official records, there are more than 600,000 refugees in the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, out of which there are almost 200,000 Serbs from Croatia, which supports the claim that this ethnic cleansing is a result of Croatia's aggressive policy that threatens the basic existential, national and human rights of the Serbs in those territories.

Aware of those facts, the international community, by the decision of the Security Council, deployed the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in order to protect the Serb population certainly not from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia but from Croatia itself and to ensure the conditions for the peaceful resolution of all disputed questions through negotiations.

The conflict in Croatia came about solely because the human and other rights of the Serbs in the Republic of Serb Krajina were denied and because the Serbs were erased from the Constitution as a constituent nation - the status they enjoyed in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia - and were turned into a national minority without any rights whatsoever, the same one that during the Second World War was exposed to unprecedented atrocities, ethnic cleansing, forced conversion and assimilation.

That the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia does not have territorial pretensions against any neighbouring country, including Croatia, is supported by the declaration of its Assembly of 27 April 1992, in which it is explicitly stated that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia does not have territorial pretensions against any country. Moreover, the conflict between the Republic of Serb Krajina and the Republic of Croatia is unfolding in the areas that are not adjacent to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is solely interested in having the parties to the conflict reach a peaceful solution through negotiations. The positive role in this regard of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has been acknowledged by the international community. Owing to such efforts of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, tangible results had already been achieved before the latest aggression of Croatia against the Republic of Serb Krajina.

Particularly absurd is the Croatian allegation that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is an aggressor, as it is a well-known fact that, at the time of the military hostilities in 1991, triggered by Croatia's secession, the then Yugoslav People's Army (JNA), as the sole legitimate military power of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, served to separate the conflicting parties and that it withdrew from those territories before Croatia gained international recognition. Such an allegation is particularly malicious since the relevant Security Council resolutions and the reports of the Secretary-General have long ago confirmed that the Army of Yugoslavia had indeed withdrawn from the crisis areas of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The letter alleges that the situation in Croatia is not a result of a lack of human, i.e. minority, rights but of a territorial expansion of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and that minority rights are being used as a pretext for aggression. However, such allegations have been challenged by the events in the past few days when Croatia undertook atrocious aggression against the Republic of Serb Krajina. Civilians, women and children, fleeing the Croatian aggression, have been deliberately targeted in the latest brutal drive of ethnic cleansing, whose goal was not only to conquer the Serb territories but to discredit the UNCRO operation in those areas. Croatia resorted to the well-known scenario by inverting the role of the aggressor and that of the victim and has accused the Serbs for all it has done against the Serb population in Croatia.

The letter alleges that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia "remains responsible for the tragic and costly consequences in Croatia". This is, in fact, a mere attempt to shift Croatia's own well-established responsibility to the State that represents continuity of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from which Croatia seceded forcibly and contrary to all international

norms. In doing so, Croatia now seeks to deny the right of the Serb people, who have lived in those areas for centuries and enjoyed the status of a constituent nation ever since 1918 when Yugoslavia came into being to defend their homes from aggression. The Serbs in Croatia are portrayed as newcomers and foreigners whose only right is to leave their homeland and thus succumb to the heinous Croatian practice of ethnic cleansing.

It is said in the letter that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia must be held responsible for the success or failure of the border control mechanism proposed by the Secretary-General and that the existing regime of United Nations sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should be linked with the successful monitoring of the border control established by Security Council resolution 981 (1995). That is the height of hypocrisy and irony, whose aim is to discredit totally the work of the Security Council and impose inadequate solutions contrary to the results achieved so far. This reconfirms that Croatia wishes to generate confusion by introducing absurd elements in its statements to water down otherwise unambiguous principles for the functioning of United Nations peace operations. It also wishes to have the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia expanded on account of Croatia's own problems, which it is obviously not capable of resolving.

It is more than evident that the aggression and genocide against the Serb people in the Republic of Serb Krajina and the Republic of Croatia continues unabated and according to a plan. It seriously threatens the peace process and undermines the active and peaceful policy of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by directly fanning the flames of war in the territory of the Republic of Serb Krajina and by crushing all efforts of the international community aimed at finally resolving the conflicts in those territories.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dragomir DJOKIC
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.